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SUBJECT: FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS
IN INDIA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. FRASER COMMITTEE HELD HEARING OF
SEPTEMBER 16 ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIA, IN CONTINUATION OF
SERIES BEGUN IN JUNE. WITNESSES WERE LEILA KABIR FERNANDES
WIFE OF JAILED OPPOSITION LEADER GEORGE FERNANDES, AND
SRIKUMAR PODDAR, US PERMANENT RESIDENT WHOSE PASSPORT WAS
CANCELLED BY GOI. PRESENT ON SUBCOMMITTEE WERE FRASER,
DERWINSKI, AND ED KOCH OF NEW YORK. ATTENDANCE BY PRESS
AND PUBLIC WAS MODERATE. HEARING PRODUCED SCATHING
CRITICISM OF MRS. GANDHI AND ASSERTION BY KOCH THAT CON-
GRESS SHOULD CUT OFF ALL AID TO INDIA. FRASER STATED THAT
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AID TO INDIA SHOULD BE SUBJECT OF FURTHER HEARING. THIS IS

NOW SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 23. END SUMMARY.

2. MRS. FERNANDES VOICED CONCERN ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S TREATMENT AT THE HANDS OF THE GOI AND EXPRESSED THE FEAR THAT THE CURRENT REPRESSIVE REGIME COULD CAUSE AN EXPLOSION WHICH COULD DAMAGE INDIAN UNITY. SHE ALSO INTRODUCED SEVERAL EXHIBITS, INCLUDING AN ALLEGATION OF TORTURE OF GEORGE'S BROTHER LAWRENCE LAST MAY. A SMALL TOUCH OF DRAMA WAS ADDED BY MRS. FERNANDES' ANNOUNCEMENT THAT SHE

HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED TO REVEAL THE NAME OF THE ANONYMOUS AUTHOR OF AN ARTICLE IN THE AUGUST ISSUE OF NEW REPUBLIC CRITICAL OF MRS. GANDHI. THE AUTHOR IS NAYANTARA SAIKAL, DAUGHTER OF VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT AND COUSIN OF PM, WHO WE UNDERSTAND IS CURRENTLY IN THE U.S. MRS. FERNANDES PLAYED PARTS OF A TAPE RECORDING CRITICAL OF THE EMERGENCY MADE BY GEORGE FERNANDES BEFORE HIS CAPTURE.

3. MR. PODDAR DESCRIBED HIS EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF INDIAN TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT OVER THE YEARS, WHICH HE CLAIMED WERE GREATLY APPRECIATED BY THE INDIAN EMBASSY, AND THE EMBASSY'S EFFORTS TO INTIMIDATE HIM AND OTHER INDIAN CRITICS SINCE THE EMERGENCY. HE STATED THAT THE CANCELLATION OF SOME PASSPORTS WILL INHIBIT MANY INDIANS FROM OPENLY ASSOCIATING WITH HIS ORGANIZATION, INDIANS FOR DEMOCRACY, AND RHETORICALLY ASKED IF HE MIGHT HAVE TO GO UNDERGROUND EVEN IN THIS COUNTRY TO AVOID THE LONG ARM OF MRS. GANDHI'S DICTATORSHIP. HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WHAT HE HAD SUFFERED WAS MERELY A "SLAP ON THE WRIST" COMPARED TO THOSE IMPRISONED IN INDIA.

4. IN RESPONSE TO FRASER'S QUESTION, BOTH WITNESSES DEBUNKED THE ARGUMENT THAT AUTHORITARIAN METHODS WERE NECESSARY TO CONFRONT STUBBORN ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. PODDAR ASSERTED THAT DRAMATIC GAINS IN PRODUCTION DURING THE DEMOCRATIC YEARS BENEFITTED ONLY THE BUREAUCRATIC AND BUSINESS ELITES. HE PORTRAYED THE EMERGENCY AS BENEFITTING THE SAME ELITES.

5. DERWINSKI ASKED SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RUBBER-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STAMP CHARACTER OF PARLIAMENT AND THE IMPRISONMENT OF LAWYERS FOR TOO-VIGOROUS DEFENSE OF DETAINEES. HE ALSO ASKED PODDAR TO CLARIFY SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS IN HIS TESTIMONY THAT INDIA IS NOW A "STALINIST" STATE WITH A "RIGHTIST" ECONOMY. PODDAR EXPLAINED THAT HE DID NOT MEAN SOVIETS HAVE GREAT INFLUENCE IN INDIA, ALTHOUGH IT IS SUBSTANTIAL, BUT RATHER THAT MRS. GANDHI EMPLOYS STALINIST REPRESSION IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

COUPLED WITH RIGHTIST ECONOMIC POLICIES BENEFITTING THE PRIVATE ELITES WHO CONTROL 80 PERCENT OF INDIA'S GNP. IN RESPONSE TO DERWINSKI'S QUERY, PODDAR STATED THAT WHILE THE US PRESS HAS PROVIDED THE ONLY EFFECTIVE CRITICISM OF MRS. GANDHI, THE US MEDIA HAVE FAILED TO ADEQUATELY DISSEMINATE THE STATEMENTS OF JP NARAYAN AND HIS OWN GROUP, AND HAVE SPREAD THE ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION THAT MRS. GANDHI CONTINUES TO HAVE BROAD POPULAR SUPPORT IN INDIA.

6. KOCH ASKED WHY THE US CONGRESS SHOULD NOT CUT OFF ALL AID TO INDIA IN AN EFFORT TO CAUSE THE PEOPLE OF INDIA TO DEPOSE THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT WHICH IS "PROPPED UP BY US AID." PODDAR GAVE HIS PERSONAL VIEW THAT AID SHOULD BE CUT OFF BUT NOTED THAT US BILATERAL AID IS NOT LARGE ENOUGH TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT A CONSORTIUM CUTOFF "WOULD QUICKLY BRING THE GOI TO ITS KNEES". KOCH ASKED WHY COMPULSORY STERILIZATION HAS NOT CAUSED A TREMENDOUS EXPLOSION IN INDIA, AND PODDAR RESPONDED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN UPRISINGS AGAINST STERILIZATION WHICH ARE NOT WELL REPORTED, BUT COMPULSION HAS NOT YET BEEN APPLIED NATIONWIDE.

7. FRASER NOTED THE INTERVENTIONIST IMPLICATIONS OF KOCH PROPOSAL AND THE CONTROVERSIAL NATURE OF THE ASSERTION THAT INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENFORCE "POLITICAL" HUMAN RIGHTS CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT LOANS. KOCH ACKNOWLEDGED INTERVENTIONIST INTENT AND JUSTIFIED IT IN THE INTEREST OF THE "HIGHER MORALITY OF HUMAN RIGHT FRASER CONCLUDED WITH THE COMMENT THAT THE QUESTION OF "FORMS" OF AID TO INDIA SHOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF ANOTHER HEARING AT WHICH THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH SHOULD TESTIFY.

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8. SUBCOMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 17 REQUESTED EXECUTIVE BRANCH WITNESS FOR SEPTEMBER 23 HEARING ON QUESTION OF AID TO INDIA IN LIGHT OF HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION THERE. ANANDA MARG REPRESENTATIVE HAS TOLD DEPARTMENT OFFICER THAT THEY EXPECT CANADIAN LAWYER, WHO HAS OBSERVED SARKAR TRIAL, AL TO TESTIFY SEPTEMBER 23.

9. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY COVERAGE OF SEPTEMBER 16 HEARINGS IN US PRESS. ROBINSON

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